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## Jim Silver to Charlotte, 26 April 1960

James W. (James Wesley) Silver (1907-1988)

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### Recommended Citation

Silver (1907-1988), James W. (James Wesley), "Jim Silver to Charlotte, 26 April 1960" (1960). *Correspondence*. 599.  
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April 26, 1960

Dear Charlotte:

In the morning I'll be sending you my box of manuscript for MISSISSIPPI IN THE CONFEDERACY: AS SEEN IN RETROSPECT. I have been through the thing so many times that I can't well count them, and have knocked out 162 more pages. Just how many pages there are now in the manuscript, that is of the proper size and number of words, I haven't the faintest idea. But the manuscript as I now have it contains 398 pages.

William Winter and I talked for three hours and were in almost complete agreement. I have complied with his list of suggestions in at least ninety per cent of the cases - though sometimes not for his reasons.

I presume that this manuscript is now acceptable to the Board, with the possible exception of the size. Hence, it seems to me that you will probably send it on to Mr. Ellegood. I suppose that he and I can work out the page business - and also his own readers have to pass on the manuscript.

As for the size of the book, I would like to make two comments; 1) I had worked on my manuscript for well over a year when it was decided to have volumes of 375 pages each. This was not the case with Bettersworth. At the time the decision was made I had collected and annotated some 1100 pages of material I thought worth while. Since then I have cut the whole thing down to 830, 560, and now to 398. I can't see any great value in any exact number of pages, and, of course, when the Board passed a resolution in regard to the number 375, it was like their prescribing for a patient they had never seen. I'm not arguing particularly about the number of pages, except to state there is nothing magical about 375.

2) It has been suggested to me that I cut out the material which is the poorest. Strange as it may seem, this is not possible. There is such a thing as balance and size of the individual chapters. I have already cut out some magnificent material, some much better than what is left. For instance, there just isn't much available on education and, let's say, the church. At the present I'm sure I've gone over this manuscript at least thirty times. I just can't see where it can be cut more, without impairing seriously the whole thing. I don't suppose that this matter needs to go back to your board committee, but this is something for you, Ellegood, and myself to think about. What we are after, I presume, is a good book, not one of a specific size. IF I HAD THE CHOICE I WOULD MUCH PREFER TO LEAVE OUT HALF THE PICTURES IN MY VOLUME THAN TO CUT IT FURTHER.

Anyway, I'm leaving for Louisville in the morning. Do you want me to make up a list of permissions to be asked? I'm not sure how to handle this. And we ought to get together on the pictures soon. At the moment the main thing is to get the money committed.

Yours,

Jim Silver